

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF GEORGIA  
MACON DIVISION

LESLIE VON SULDON,

Plaintiff

VS.

SANDRA ABRAMS; Dr. JAMES  
ODOM; BRUCE CHATMAN,  
Officer BYNUM; Dr. VINOD  
SACHDEVA

Defendants

NO. 5:06-CV-271 (DF)

PROCEEDINGS UNDER 42 U.S.C. §1983  
BEFORE THE U. S. MAGISTRATE JUDGE

<b>ORDER AND RECOMMENDATION</b>
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Plaintiff **LESLIE VON SULDON**, an inmate at the Dooly State Prison in Unadilla, Georgia, has filed a *pro se* civil rights complaint under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. He also seeks leave to proceed without prepayment of the filing fee or security therefor pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a). In an Order dated September 14, 2006, the Court granted his motion to proceed *in forma pauperis*.

**I. STANDARD OF REVIEW**

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915A, a federal court is required to dismiss a prisoner's complaint against a governmental entity or officer or employee of a governmental entity at any time if the court determines that the action "(1) is frivolous, malicious, or fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted; or (2) seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief." A claim is frivolous "where it lacks an arguable basis either in law or in fact." *Neitzke v. Williams*, 490 U.S. 319, 325 (1989). A complaint may be dismissed for failure to state a claim on which relief may be granted when it appears beyond doubt that the plaintiff can prove no set of facts in support of his claim which would entitle him to relief. *Scheuer v. Rhodes*, 416 U.S. 232 (1974).

In order to state a claim for relief under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, a plaintiff must allege two elements. First, the plaintiff must allege that an act or omission deprived him of a right, privilege or immunity secured by the Constitution of the United States. See *Wideman v. Shallowford Community Hosp., Inc.*, 826 F.2d 1030, 1032 (11<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1987). Second, the plaintiff must allege that the act or omission was committed by a person acting under color of state law. *Id.*

## **II. STATEMENT AND ANALYSIS OF PLAINTIFF'S CLAIMS**

Plaintiff filed his original complaint on August 9, 2006. In this complaint, he named three defendants: Bruce Chatman, Sandra Abrams, and Dr. James Odom. In an Order dated September 14, 2006, the Court ordered plaintiff to supplement his complaint. Plaintiff filed this supplement, naming two additional defendants: Dr. Vinod Sachdeva and Officer Bynum.

Construing both the original complaint and plaintiff's supplement, the Court finds as follows: Plaintiff states that in September of 2005, he severely injured his back. At this time, plaintiff was incarcerated at the Thomas County Correctional Facility. Plaintiff alleges that Officer Bynum told him to remain on the "detail truck" and that "at the end of the day he would write out an injury report." Plaintiff states that he remained on the truck in severe pain from 7:30 am until "late pm."

According to plaintiff, when the work-day ended, he was taken to see the nurse. Plaintiff states that the nurse gave him some medication, but he remained in pain. Plaintiff alleges that from September of 2005 until June 13, 2006, he complained of back pain and was given various medications that did not help.

Plaintiff alleges that Dr. James Odom informed him that he needed to have an operation on his back but refused to allow him to see a specialist and refused to complete the necessary forms so that plaintiff could have the surgery. Furthermore, plaintiff states that Dr. Odom did not document his medical file so that he could receive adequate treatment when he was transferred to Dooly State Prison.

Plaintiff avers that the Warden at Thomas County Correctional Facility, Sandra Abrams, was notified of his serious medical condition, but she informed him that he had to return to his “detail.” Plaintiff states that he was eventually assigned to work in the kitchen; there, he had to stand all day, causing him to experience severe back pain.

Plaintiff states that when he was transferred to Dooly State Prison in June of 2006, Warden Chatman and Dr. Sachdeva were notified of his back condition. He claims that Dr. Sachdeva refused any further treatment other than an x-ray; he maintains that Warden Chatman also refused to allow him further treatment for his condition. Plaintiff notes that a nurse practitioner at Dooly State Prison did treat him for his condition and says that she discovered that he had a ruptured disc in his back.

Plaintiff states that Dr. Sachdeva still refuses to allow him a walking stick or cane to help him walk and further alleges that Dr. Sachdeva refuses to let him have an extra mattress or pillows to alleviate the pain when he is sitting or lying down. Plaintiff maintains that he is “not able to walk or sit.”

The Court notes that plaintiff has sued three defendants who are employed at the Thomas County Correctional Facility (Sandra Abrams, Dr. James Odum, and Officer Bynum) and two defendants who are employed at Dooly State Prison (Bruce Chatman and Dr. Sachdeva). A plaintiff may set forth only related claims in one civil rights complaint. He may not join unrelated claims and various defendants unless the claims arise “out of the same transaction, occurrence, or series of transactions or occurrences and if any question of law or fact common to all defendants will arise in the action.” Fed. R. Civ. P. 20(a). As recognized by the Eleventh Circuit, “a claim arises out of the same transaction or occurrence if there is a logical relationship between the claims.” *Construction Aggregates, Ltd. v. Forest Commodities Corp.*, 147 F.3d 1334, 1337 n.6 (11th Cir. 1998).

Plaintiff has failed to show a “logical relationship” between his separate allegations and claims relating to the Thomas County Correctional Facility and Dooly State Prison. Plaintiff’s claims against defendants employed at the Thomas County Correctional Facility have to do with his initial injury, alleged lack of medical care while at that facility, and his allegation that he was forced to work while in severe pain. Plaintiff’s claims against defendants employed at Dooly State Prison have to do with plaintiff’s alleged lack of medical care *after* his arrival at this facility in June of 2006.

Because plaintiff has not shown a “logical relationship” between his separate allegations and claims relating to the Thomas County Correctional Facility and Dooly State Prison, the joinder of these unrelated claims should not be permitted. The Court notes that plaintiff has filed this action in the United States District Court, Middle District of Georgia, Macon Division. Dooly State Prison is located in Dooly County which is assigned to the Macon Division. However, Thomas County Correctional Facility is located in Thomas County which is assigned to the Thomasville Division. As this action is currently pending in the Macon Division, the Court will allow the action to go forward against defendants CHATMAN and SACHDEVA who are both employed at Dooly State Prison.

However, the undersigned **RECOMMENDS** that defendants Sandra Abrams, Dr. James Odum, and Officer Bynum be **DISMISSED WITHOUT PREJUDICE** from this action. Plaintiff may then file a separate civil rights complaint for his claims against these three defendants in the United States District Court, Middle District of Georgia, THOMASVILLE Division.

Under 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1), plaintiff may serve and file written objections to this recommendation with the district judge to whom this case is assigned **WITHIN TEN (10) DAYS** after being served with a copy of this Order and Recommendation.

Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED AND DIRECTED that service be made as provided by law only upon the defendants **BRUCE CHATMAN** and **DR. VINOD SACHDEVA**; that a WAIVER OF REPLY, an ANSWER or such other response as may be appropriate under Rule 12 of the **FEDERAL RULES OF CIVIL PROCEDURE**, 28 U.S.C. §1915, and the *Prison Litigation Reform Act* be filed herein by said defendants as required and permitted by law.

It is further ORDERED AND DIRECTED that a copy of this order be served upon plaintiff's custodian, if any.

**DUTY TO ADVISE OF ADDRESS CHANGE**

During the pendency of this action, each party shall at all times keep the Clerk of this court and all opposing attorneys and/or parties advised of his current address. **FAILURE TO PROMPTLY ADVISE THE CLERK OF ANY CHANGE OF ADDRESS MAY RESULT IN THE DISMISSAL OF A PARTY'S PLEADINGS FILED HEREIN!**



**DUTY TO PROSECUTE ACTION**

Plaintiff is advised that he must diligently prosecute his complaint or face the possibility that it will be dismissed under Rule 41(b) of the FEDERAL RULES OF CIVIL PROCEDURE for failure to prosecute. Defendants are advised that they are expected to diligently defend all allegations made against them and to file timely dispositive motions as hereinafter directed. This matter will be set down for trial when the court determine that discovery has been completed and all motions have been disposed of or the time for filing dispositive motions has passed.

**FILING AND SERVICE OF MOTIONS, PLEADINGS, DISCOVERY AND CORRESPONDENCE**

It is the responsibility of each party to file original motions, pleadings, and correspondence with the Clerk of court; to serve copies of all motions, pleadings, discovery, and correspondence (including letters to the Clerk or to a judge) upon opposing parties or counsel for opposing parties if they are represented; and to attach to said original motions and pleadings filed with the Clerk a **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE** indicating who has been served and where (i.e., at what address), when service was made, and how service was accomplished (i.e., by U. S. Mail, by personal service, etc.).

**THE CLERK OF COURT WILL NOT SERVE OR FORWARD COPIES OF SUCH MOTIONS, PLEADINGS, AND CORRESPONDENCE ON BEHALF OF THE PARTIES!**

**DISCOVERY**

PLAINTIFF(S) SHALL NOT COMMENCE DISCOVERY UNTIL AN ANSWER OR DISPOSITIVE MOTION HAS BEEN FILED ON BEHALF OF THE DEFENDANT(S) FROM WHOM DISCOVERY IS SOUGHT BY THE PLAINTIFF(S). THE DEFENDANT(S) SHALL NOT COMMENCE DISCOVERY UNTIL SUCH TIME AS AN ANSWER OR DISPOSITIVE MOTION HAS BEEN FILED. Once an answer or dispositive motion has been filed, the parties are authorized to seek discovery from one another as provided in the FEDERAL RULES OF CIVIL PROCEDURE. The deposition of the plaintiff, a state/county prisoner, may be taken at any time during the time period hereinafter set out provided prior arrangements are made with his/her custodian.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that discovery (including depositions and interrogatories) shall be completed **WITHIN 90 DAYS** from the date of filing of an **ANSWER** or **DISPOSITIVE MOTION** by the defendant(s), unless an extension is otherwise granted by the court upon a showing of good cause therefor or a protective order is sought by the defendants and granted by the court. This **90 DAY** period shall run separately as to each plaintiff and each defendant beginning on the date of filing of each defendant's answer/dispositive motion. The scheduling of a trial herein may be advanced upon notification from the parties that no further discovery is contemplated or that discovery has been completed prior to the deadline.

DISCOVERY MATERIALS SHALL NOT BE FILED WITH THE CLERK OF COURT. **NO PARTY SHALL BE REQUIRED TO RESPOND TO ANY DISCOVERY NOT DIRECTED TO HIM OR SERVED UPON HIM BY THE OPPOSING COUNSEL/PARTY!** The undersigned incorporates herein those parts of the **Local Rules** imposing the following limitations on discovery: except with written permission of the court first obtained, **INTERROGATORIES** may not exceed TWENTY-FIVE (25) to each party, **REQUESTS FOR PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS AND THINGS** under Rule 34 of the FEDERAL RULES OF CIVIL PROCEDURE may not exceed TEN (10) requests to each party, and **REQUESTS FOR ADMISSIONS** under Rule 36 of the FEDERAL RULES OF CIVIL PROCEDURE may not exceed TEN (10) requests to each party. No party shall be required to respond to any such requests which exceed these limitations.



### **REQUESTS FOR DISMISSAL AND/OR JUDGMENT**

Dismissal of this action or requests for judgment will not be considered by the court absent the filing of a **SEPARATE MOTION** therefor accompanied by a brief/memorandum of law citing supporting authorities. DISPOSITIVE MOTIONS should be filed at the earliest time possible, but in any event no later than **THIRTY (30) DAYS** after the close of discovery unless otherwise directed by the court.

### **DIRECTIONS TO CUSTODIAN OF PLAINTIFF**

Following the payment of the required initial partial filing fee or the waiving of the payment of same, the **WARDEN** of the institution wherein plaintiff is incarcerated, or the Sheriff of any county wherein he is held in custody, and any successor custodians, shall *each month* cause to be remitted to the Clerk of this court **TWENTY PERCENT (20%)** of the preceding month's income credited to plaintiff's account at said institution until the \$350.00 filing fee has been paid in full. In accordance with provisions of the *Prison Litigation Reform Act*, plaintiff's custodian is hereby authorized to forward payments from the prisoner's account to the Clerk of court *each month* until the filing fee is paid in full, *provided* the amount in the account exceeds \$10.00.


IT IS FURTHER ORDERED AND DIRECTED that collection of monthly payments from plaintiff's trust fund account shall continue until the entire \$350.00 has been collected, notwithstanding the dismissal of plaintiff's lawsuit or the granting of judgment against him prior to the collection of the full filing fee.

### **PLAINTIFF'S OBLIGATION TO PAY FILING FEE**

Pursuant to provisions of the *Prison Litigation Reform Act*, in the event plaintiff is hereafter released from the custody of the State of Georgia or any county thereof, he shall remain obligated to pay any balance due on the filing fee in this proceeding until said amount has been paid in full; plaintiff shall continue to remit monthly payments as required by the *Prison Litigation Reform Act*. Collection from the plaintiff of any balance due on the filing fee by any means permitted by law is hereby authorized in the event plaintiff is released from custody and fails to remit payments. In addition, plaintiff's complaint is subject to dismissal if he has the ability to make monthly payments and fails to do so.

**ELECTION TO PROCEED BEFORE THE  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE**

Under **Local Rule 72**, all prisoner complaints filed under provisions of 42 U.S.C. §1983 are referred to a full-time United States Magistrate Judge for this district for consideration of all pretrial matters. In addition, 28 U.S.C. §636(c)(1) authorizes and empowers full-time magistrate judges to conduct any and all proceedings in a jury or nonjury civil matter and to order the entry of judgment in a case upon the written consent of all of the parties. Whether the parties elect to proceed before a magistrate judge or retain their right to proceed before a U. S. district judge is strictly up to the parties themselves.

 After the filing of responsive pleadings by the defendants, the Clerk of court is directed to provide **ELECTION FORMS** to the parties and/or to their legal counsel, if represented. Upon receipt of the **ELECTION FORMS**, each party shall cause the same to be executed and returned to the Clerk's Office **WITHIN FIFTEEN (15) DAYS**. Counsel may execute **ELECTION FORMS** on behalf of their clients provided they have such permission from their clients. However, counsel must specify on the **ELECTION FORMS** on whose behalf the form is executed.

SO ORDERED AND RECOMMENDED, this 27<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2006.



CLAUDE W. HICKS, JR.  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE



**ADDENDUM TO ORDER**

**NOTICE TO ALL PARTIES**

PURSUANT TO THE COURT'S ORDER REGARDING DISCOVERY SET OUT ABOVE, NO DISCOVERY SHALL BE PERMITTED IN THIS CASE UNTIL AN ANSWER OR DISPOSITIVE MOTION (e.g., MOTION TO DISMISS, MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT, MOTION FOR JUDGMENT ON THE PLEADINGS) HAS BEEN FILED BY THE DEFENDANT(S).

PURSUANT TO THE FEDERAL RULES OF CIVIL PROCEDURE, DISCOVERY (DEPOSITIONS, INTERROGATORIES, REQUESTS FOR PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS AND THINGS, REQUESTS FOR ADMISSIONS, ETC., AND RESPONSES THERETO) SHALL NOT BE FILED WITH THE CLERK OF COURT. NOTE THAT THIS IS A CHANGE IN THE PROCEDURE HERETOFORE FOLLOWED IN THIS DISTRICT.

DO NOT FILE ANY DISCOVERY WITH THE COURT UNLESS YOU ARE SPECIFICALLY DIRECTED TO DO SO BY THE COURT OR UNLESS FILING IS NECESSARY TO SUPPORT OR CONTEST A MOTION TO COMPEL DISCOVERY, OBJECTION TO DISCOVERY, DISPOSITIVE MOTION, OR SIMILAR MOTION. THE CLERK IS DIRECTED TO RETURN ANY SUBMITTED DISCOVERY TO THE PARTY SUBMITTING IT UNLESS IT IS FILED PURSUANT TO AN ORDER OF THE COURT OR IN SUPPORT OF A MOTION TO COMPEL, OBJECTION TO DISCOVERY, DISPOSITIVE MOTION, OR SIMILAR MOTION.